1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

The Family Compounds: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

The Ten'dan': Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[2] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

Duties of Ten'dan': (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

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Purification of the land when some one is sold: When a person sells
a son or a brother, he may not tell the *Ten'dan'*, nor will the latter take any notice, but sooner or later some misfortune will befall the vendor, or some of his family, and on consulting the *bay* (soothsayer) he will be informed that his having sold some one is the cause; he will be advised to give a cow, sheep, or goat to the *Ten'dan'*. He will give the offering to the land, saying: 'My father, there was a famine, and some one sold his own son, and he has brought these things. Receive them and prevent headache and belly-ache, and give them to the land.'

I asked my informant why he used his father's spirit as an intermediary. He replied, 'My ancestor knew the land before myself; all our ancestors are in the ground, which is a *bagere*' (shrine).

Duties of the Ten'dan' in Connexion with the Making of a New Farm: The man about to make a new farm will sacrifice to his ancestor through the head of his compound. He will then take a fowl to the *kpasodan*'[1] (the tenant of that land) who will give the offering to his ancestor. This tenant had originally approached the *Ten'dan'* before acquiring the land, and the sub-tenant, therefore, apparently need not again do so. A *Ten'dan'*, on giving land to any one for the first time, will ask for fowls (not white ones), one for his father, one for the land. 'After sacrificing, I will conduct the man to the land, take a hoe, break the ground, and tell the man that he may begin cultivating. I show him the boundaries of his farm. I need not tell him that anything he finds on the land is mine; he knows that already. He knows, too, that if he ever refuses to allow any one to pass over his land, or if he is greedy about his crops, not giving some to those who are hungry, I have the power to drive him from the land.'

'The *Ten'dan'* makes the land good.' 'The *Ten'dan'* owns (or rather owned, for in many places I found this ancient prerogative usurped by the Chiefs) all lost cows, sheep, goats, donkeys, fowls, iron, hoes, axes, and brass ornaments. A *Ten'dan'* is never succeeded by his brother or by his son. This hat [referring to the distinctive string hat worn by *Ten'dan'*] is not a rich thing. Any one in a section may become *Ten'dan'*.'

Again: 'When the Mampruse, under *Misore*, first came here, they captured a man near a well who said he was the *Ten'dan'* of Gbeo. Later on *Misore* found other *Ten'dam'* at Bare, Ka, and Kundugu. He did not kill them, but appointed them to sacrifice to the land and show him her *kyibir* (avoidances, Nankane *kyisiri*), and rights—avoidance of blood, right of *Ten'dan'* to lost property or anything found on the

[1] Nankane, *Kuseodana*.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor approaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *ahen* (*isiga* in Nankane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *ahen* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *ahen* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *ahen* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was given me by the *Ten'dan*' of Tongo:

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*leho*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog*'). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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white one) and a goat (any colour but white) and some flour and water. I give the flour-water first, saying: "My father, accept this water, drink, and give it to this earth; death has killed and they have called me and taken their fowl and goat and given them to you because they will beat your head; because of this they say that I must receive and give to you".

'The fowl is then killed beside the grave: "My father, receive and give to the land." The goat is killed and its blood caught in a red pot. The fowl is roasted whole. The goat is skinned and the flesh divided; I take a hind leg, the head, neck, liver, and skin. We all eat at the grave-side. A small piece of each sacrifice is put on the land. The corpse is brought and taken from its mat; it is buried naked save for a goat-skin. The corpse is laid on its right side, knees drawn up, hands folded under the cheeks. If the dead is a male, he faces east, because a man is always impatient for dawn. A woman is buried facing the setting sun because she is always so busy that she says, "The sun is setting, I shall not have time to grind; I shall not have time to get my husband's food." As the body is being lowered I say to the land, "Receive your thing, let it go inside nicely".' A stone is placed over the entrance of the grave. The *Ten'dan*' takes a hoe and scrapes up some earth from each side over the stone; others then complete the work.'

Figs. 64–5 show Talense graves. Fig. 64 is that of a Chief. I do not think that there is any doubt but that the design of the spirit shrines were originally copied from such structures. The shape of a Talense grave within, is, I am informed, like that already described, i.e. more or less circular with a bottle-neck. Chiefs, who, as we have seen, are of Mampruse origin, are buried in their own compound in a room which is broken down after the funeral custom.[1] The grave of a Chief is called *duye*, that of a commoner *yeo*. Chiefs are sacrificed to on the *duye* by the eldest son. 'When a man or woman dies, he or she will become an axe or bangle.'

Shrines: Talense shrines and the cult associated with them appear to be very similar to those of the Nankanse. I propose to take my reader round the compound of my friend Sayebere, a *Ten'dan*' of Tongo (see frontispiece), and let him describe in his own words the various shrines which are there encountered. Outside the compound walls is a pot set on stones, containing, he said, ground roots and earth. On top of the pot is a head-rest, smeared with the feathers of past sacrifices, and on top of this again, a stone. This fetish (*tim*, lit. 'medi-

[1] A room near the outside is chosen.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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cine' or 'roots') is 'to prevent war'; it is called *mweley* (compare Nankane *mweleya*[1]). 'When the war cry is raised I will first sacrifice a fowl on the stone, saying: "They want to shoot arrows, and I wish to stop it; receive a fowl, and compel them not to shoot; let the women and children sleep." The stone on top of the head-rest signifies that we compel people to sit down. After I sacrifice the fowl, cow dung

FIG. 66

and corn-cobs are placed round the pot and set on fire, while I say: "My father, call your father; let women and children sleep; they wish to shoot arrows; fire wants to burn the land, but I wish it to be cool." When the fire which I have lit goes out, the war is also burning out. The roots inside the pot are from a shea butter tree; when you eat shea butter your heart will become cool. This *tim bagere* (medicine shrine) is related to the one I wear round my neck which is also called *mweley*. I take it off and place it on top of the stone when the fire is burning. Some *mweley* are now used by Chiefs to encourage disputes in order that they may be able to fine people.'

The above account was written nearly two years before my note on the same subject among the Nankanse.[2] I had, indeed, forgotten the latter, until I came to go over my notes in writing these volumes. It affords a good example, coupled with other evidence, of the close resemblance between the religion and customs of these two tribes, and also of the accuracy of the information imparted by two wholly independent informants. Unfortunately, the photograph I took of this shrine was not successful, but Fig. 66 A, is a rough diagram illustrating it and other shrines standing beside it. On the left of the *mweley* fetish stand two conical mounds, B and C. B is, Sayebere informed me, that of his *yab-pɔk la o bi* (grandmother and her son). The clay mound had a flat piece of iron on top covered by a potsherd and stone. C is a *Ŋ'ini zug-bagere* (God-above shrine). On the apex of the mound was a piece of iron let into the clay which was covered

[1] See p. 303. [2] See p. 304.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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796 The following are a selection of these petitions; in my notebook; they are jotted down in the vernacular (Ashanti) of which the following
782 are literal translations:

'I was at my town of Mampon, and I heard about grandfather (*nana*, here a term of respect), so I came to lean upon him, that he might give me health, which I once had. I keep a store and I have two motor-cars. From that store I derive no profit whatever. As for my two motor-cars, when I ply them for hire and people enter them, I only incur debts and there is no profit in them. Because of that, and because I have heard of grandfather, I have come to ask him if he will show me the way to make profit. Again, I have four wives and they have either not borne children, or, if they have, the children die. Therefore help me, and permit my wives to bear children, and give my relations health and long life.'

Another: 'As for me, I come from Kwawu (in the Colony). Now the work which we do to-day is farming, but when I do it I get no profit. When I cultivate cocoa, and the trees grow, they die, or when the trees bear pods, they rot. I also have a store, but I get no profit from that; then I heard about *nana* and I came to lean upon him, that he may give me and all my relations life, my nephews and my "brothers" life, and that I may obtain much profit.'

Another: 'I am a clerk, who pays his debts, as my neighbours pay me what they owe me, yet I have not a copper (*capre*). I have four wives, yet none of them has a child; when one bears an infant, it dies. I have heard of *nana* and I have come to take myself and put myself in his hands that he may help me and let me get much money.'

Another: 'I come from a street in Kwawu. I have heard about *nana*. The work which men do these days is farming. I have a plantation, but I get nothing out of it; when the crops ripen, beasts (i.e. insects) eat them, and the cocoa-trees die. Whatever I do, I get in debt; therefore I have come to lean upon you, that you may help me and give me profit.'

A Woman's Prayer: 'I have come from a street in Kwawu, and I have heard of *nana*, and I have brought myself to lean on you, that you may give me life. I was in Kumase and I bore a child and it died, so I give myself to you, in order that if any one has caused this you may kill him, and guard me and let me bear another. If I do, I will repay you.'

Another: 'I have come from Mampon. I have heard about this god. I have a sickness in my belly; it never ceases; it cries out *ko! ko!*

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Look to my sickness that it may cease. If any one is doing this to me, catch him for me, or kill him and let me get health and strength.'

Another: 'I was in my town when I heard of this god, that he is strong, so I came to lean on him that he may help me. I am a person who drinks gin always and I am become a drunkard. Help me to stop drinking. Again, whatever work I do, I get in debt. If some one is doing all this to me, let *nana* catch him or kill him for me.'

When I state that these supplicants were educated men and women, some of whom owned large businesses, well-furnished European houses, and not a few of them their own cars, in which they had come hundreds of miles to visit this pagan god, the power and influence of the old beliefs may readily be imagined. I need not multiply examples. All the petitions were based on the same formula—the god was *nana*, the supplicants had come to lean upon him (*dan nebo*). They were promised nothing. If their prayers were answered, they would bring back an offering. Nearly every one asked for 'money' or 'profit'.

When the servite was ended, we all backed out again into the sunlight and were led, complete silence being enjoined upon us, to the entrance of the second cave. Here the offerings were sacrificed over a mound so smothered in congealed blood and feathers as to hide its surface completely.

The *Ten'dan'* lifted up a round stone and tapped it against this altar. Each person then handed him the offering he or she had brought. Its throat was cut, the blood flowed on the altar, and the sacrifice was cast down. My sheep was sacrificed last of all. The photograph, Fig. 77, shows the old *Ten'dan'* about to cut its throat. All this was carried out in complete silence. We all then returned to where every one had undressed, and each person was smeared with a line of red clay on the side of each cheek, between the breasts, on each forearm, on the legs and back. This ended the ceremony.

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NAMNAM

622 793 628 Nangoot people wished to make war on them, the *Ten'dan'* would stop them. The murderer will thus escape. The head Chief had not any power to tell the *Kambon-nab'* of the murderer's *teya* to hand him over, but he would bring cows and purify the land.

622 793 'When murderer and murdered man were from the same *teya* or same section, the murderer was not tried or killed, but he would have to leave the town. If he remained behind, and heard the funeral custom of his victim, or if he ate any food or drank any water in which the dead man's cloth had been dipped, he would die. His family would bring a cow, sheep, and goat to the Chief. The cow was handed to the *Ten'dan'*, who gave it to the land, saying, "A young rascal has destroyed, and they have brought their gifts, that I may receive and give you, that you may hide the sin, and that people may sleep (lit. that sleep may sleep), the corn bloom, child-bearing continue, and marriages be celebrated".

793 627 'A *Ten'dan'* was not allowed to ask the land to punish any one.[1] He could not do so; the land must not hate any one, but love all men alike, even murderers. The murderer would leave with his wife and family and never return. He might go to his in-laws; if he were ever to return, he would die, the *tobog'* of the murdered man would kill him.'[2]

793 762 782 *Suicide* (*Ko-fo-meya*): 'The family of the suicide took a cow, a sheep, and a goat and handed them to the Chief, who gave the cow to the *Ten'dan'* for the land. He sacrificed it, saying: "A man has made heart (i.e. got angry) and killed himself; that is finished, but a wife remains, a boy remains, let them sleep well; do not let this same thing return". [761] A suicide had already spoken before birth; he had made a vow, he would die as a man, *buda kum*.'[3]

623 624 793 All important matters were discussed by the Chief, *Ten'dan'*, and section-heads.

793 787 *Succession to Ten'dan'*: 'When a *Ten'dan'* died, and while his funeral custom was being made, they called a *bay* (soothsayer), meeting at the *zoy* hut, outside the compound, and, in the presence of the Elders, but not of the Chief, consulted and selected a new *Ten'dan'*. Any one might become *Ten'dan'* except any member of the Chief's family. A brother might succeed a brother.'[4]

[1] But see p. 376.

[2] There seems here a clear distinction between murdering or killing a clansman and a stranger.

[3] A natural death is often known as *bum pok kum* (a woman's death).

[4] This is not so among the Nankanse.

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Kusase

Tenedan' will tell the land that if she permits the sowing, and good crops result, that he will give her a beast and beer. After a good harvest, each of the Elders will catch a fowl and take grain for beer, and the *Tenedan'* will take the beast and go to the *tengban* (grove) where the vow (lit. mouth) was made, and make the sacrifice. If a *Tenedan'* is very old, his son may do this for him. The sacrifice is made on a stone at the foot of a tree. This stone will receive it and give to the land. The land is not a human spirit.' The *Tenedan'* will say:

'"We asked you to help us to eat. Now we are eating, we cannot refuse you yours, receive this beer." We pour out the beer and then kill the fowls and goats. Sometimes the land will ask for a cow (through the soothsayer). The *Tenedan'* will then ask every one to give him some grain, and when he has enough, he will exchange this for a cow. Every one in the *teya* will eat some of the meat. The *Tenedan'* will take one hind leg, the head, and the skin. Women and children too will have some. Any one who hates the *Tenedan'* and eats of this sacrifice will die. The *Tenedan'* and the *Tey-kpeem* (Elders of the *teya*) always discussed town affairs together.'

Succession to the Tenedan'ship: 'When a *Tenedan'* dies, his next eldest brother succeeds. If he has no brothers, then, his eldest "son"; that means the eldest of all the "sons" among the *Tenedan'* and his brothers. In some towns, a man who has a brother may not become a *Tenedan'*, but it is not so among the Kusase. A *Tenedan'* had power to drive a man out of the *teya*. A wise man would listen and go, but a fool would remain until he lost everything.'

Tenedan' and the Land: 'A *Tenedan'* is in charge of all uncultivated land. Any one who wishes to cultivate there will tell the *Tenedan'*, saying, "*Seare* (uncultivated ground) (Nankane, *seka*) lies there and I wish to make a farm upon it". The *Tenedan'* will send a boy to look at the place and show the man the boundaries. The man will turn up the soil a few times in the presence of this messenger. After the farmer has worked on this land for some time, he will brew beer, and take a fowl and give to the *Tenedan'* to sacrifice to the land. This he will do in his own compound, giving it to his father's *bagr* (shrine) to give to the land, saying: "Father, receive this fowl and beer; somebody has seen some uncultivated land, which he wishes to farm; he has brought this fowl and beer; receive it and give to your father to give to the land that the farmer may get crops". The remainder of the beer is for those who are helping him to clear the land and the *Tenedan'* will also send his son to pour some on the land and say:

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'"Land, receive your beer and drink; a person wishes to farm. Permit the workers to rise up from their labours without headache and belly-ache."

'When the farmer gets each new crop, he gives the *Tenedan'* a large bundle of grain, and from time to time a large pot of beer and a guinea-fowl, that is, if his belly has been washed (if he is happy). If this farmer later leaves the land even for many years, it still belongs to him, and when he dies, that place is for his "sons", but if he gives it up entirely, and some one else wants it, the *Tenedan'* will first direct him to that man or to his family. The *Tenedan'* still "owns" the land which he has given away, because anything that is found on it still belongs to him. He, the farmer, owns the *kobo* (the right to cultivate) but he could never sell it. In olden days *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'*, even if growing on a man's land, and no one dared to pick the fruit, even in the uncultivated bush, but when the tree was growing on a man's own *saman* (farm near his compound), the *Tenedan'* would share the fruit with him. Shea butter trees in the bush belonged to all the town; those on family farms to that family, those on a privately owned farm to the owner of that plot. The reason that *dawa dawa* trees belonged to the *Tenedan'* is because these trees grow up owing to some one having eaten the seed and passed it in his excrement.'

793 425

Lost Animals: 'Lost fowls, sheep, goats, cows, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. I here asked about treasure trove in the form of cowries. Expressions of horror were manifested at the idea of the finder taking these. 'No one would touch such a find; the finder would cover them up and not even let any one know; they belong to the land and the spirits.'

'In the case of beads, a *baa* (soothsayer) will probably tell the finder that they are "*Wen*" (God) and he will keep them. Any one found on the land, who had no master, belonged to the *Tenedan'*. He was a *Ten-pin* (a gift from the land). Dead elephants or antelope if it were not known who had killed them, belonged to the *Tenedan'*; if known who had wounded them, the *Tenedan'* only received a hind leg.'

224 624

Go-dan: 'We used to have a *go-dan*; he was one who had once lost a relative in the bush and when the seasonal hunting parties go hunting he is in charge of them, and receives a foreleg of each animal killed. He is really running after his lost brother, and the others are helping him. The *go-dan* would give the *Tenedan'* two forelegs, after the hunting, and some fowls before the hunting begins. The *go-dan* does

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In a corner beside this *wen bay* is another lightning protector, a long stick with one end bent into a hoop, also a pot containing roots. 'When the rain does not fall, I sacrifice to it, saying, "God and the land, I want to beg water, because corn, beans, and other grain are withering." When it does rain, the person who made the sacrifice has to stand here in the rain for some time and not go into the room. The bent stick is for tying the lightning. Before this sacrifice is made, and before the rain is called, the one who is about to do so, bathes with water in which the roots in the pot are soaked.' This particular *dog*, which is that of the senior wife, contained the following huts:

(*a*) A small hut for boys, sons of the *Yi-dan* called *bis dog* (boys' room).
(*b*) The hut of the senior wife of the *Yi-dan*.
(*c*) A kitchen (*daan*), *daana* in Nankane, unroofed, but behind it is another kitchen, roofed, used in the wet season.

Each *dog* is identical in construction; a sleeping-room, and a dry- and wet-season kitchen surrounded by its own private yard. In the centre of all these women's quarters is a square hut, called *yi-dan-dog* where the head of the compound sleeps. Joined on to the above compound, but with a separate entrance, is another compound, a replica of the first. It is that of the eldest son of the *Yi-dan*. Among the Kusase, as among the Nankanse, an eldest son may 'go out', that is go away and build a new homestead some hundred yards or more from that of his father, or he may have his home adjoining that of his parent but with a separate entrance. The son in this case had done the latter. He possessed his own *Wen bay* (*Yini* in Nankane), not a large flat-topped circular shrine like his father's, but just a small earth mound. This son's compound contained three yards, each containing one living hut and two kitchens. He had a separate grain-store independently of his father. Among the Kusase these grain-stores are not inside, but outside the compounds, differing in this respect from the Nankanse.

The *zɔŋ* hut, already mentioned, also contained the 'medicine pot', set by his slayer, for the spirit of a man who has been murdered or killed in war. This shrine, after the death of its original owner, will be kept in the *zɔŋ* hut (compare the Nankane *tobega*). The following is a description of this custom among the Kusase.

'When one man kills another, he has to get a *yur* (pot). This pot he will "set" and bathe with the medicine which it contains for

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Kusase

Five to six months after birth

the infant will be named. A soothsayer may tell the father that a certain *Wen* (Nankane *Yini*), either his own, his father's, or grandfather's, wants the child as its *segr* (Nankane *segere*). The father will then take flour-water and a fowl and a guinea-fowl and offer them on that shrine, and after doing so, give the child some of the flour-water to drink. When sacrificing, he will speak as follows:

'"Here is an infant which I have begotten; you have said you want it; do not let a hawk (a witch) catch it; guard it well; if it grows and lives and walks by itself, I will give you a beast." After the infant has been given the flour-water to drink, the mother holds it and the father will name it after the object which is the abode of the spirit in the shrine, the *baya* (bangle) or whatever it may be, the infant's hand touching this thing while he names it.

'Later, the mother of the mother of the infant will ask that her daughter and grandchild may visit them, and, if the soothsayer says that they may do so, they will go to her for from three to five months.

'A man does not cohabit with his wife for two to three years, or even more, after she has borne a child; it depends on how soon the child is walking about. A child born with any teeth was formerly killed. Twins (*Ki kiris*) which die as infants are considered to have been fairies and are buried in the bush. A dead infant is buried in an ordinary grave near a path, a piece of potsherd being placed over the ear to keep out earth, the grave being filled in and a stone put on top to mark the place. "It is buried near a path so that it may find its way back to the compound for food; if it were buried far away in the bush it would get lost." A stillborn child, if formed, is buried as described above; if not formed, it is put in a pot and buried on the kitchen midden. A woman who dies in childbirth is not given a funeral custom; she is buried in the bush in an oblong-shaped grave which is then filled in. The husband will bathe for three days with leaves and the third day will shave his head. "The reason that the woman is buried far away is because, the husband if he saw her grave would die, and if he took part in any funeral custom for her he would die."'

Kusase Marriage Customs:

'If a man has already paid cows and discovers later that his wife is barren, he cannot claim them back. If, however, he has not yet paid them, he may then refuse to give them, in which case her father may take her away, but even then she may run back to her husband.'

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PLATE IV

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(*a*) Ritual strangling of a goat to provide the loin cover for a Namoo elder's burial.

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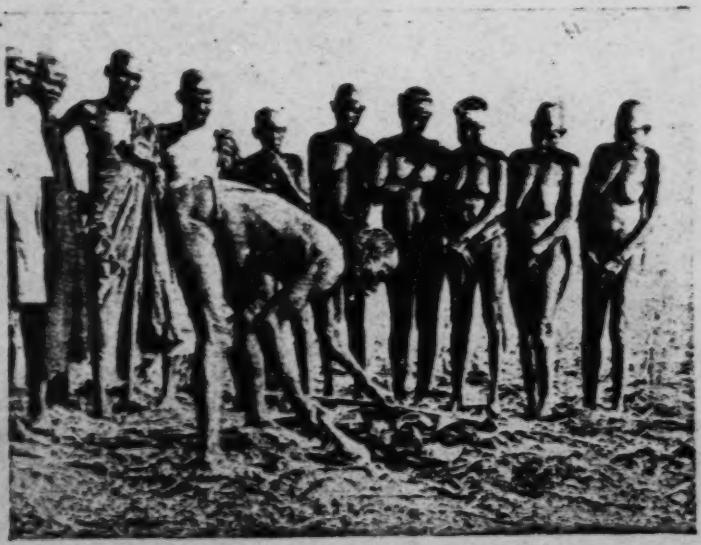

(*b*) *Dma wyar*, the final rite of a Namoo funeral, is peculiar to Namoos.

[facing p. 57]

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PLATE V

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(*a*) Clanship at Zubiuŋ: Elders of Kpayara yayar awaiting the representatives of the other two maximal lineages at the entrance to the External *Bɔyar* Duunkpaləg, in order to perform a sacrifice.

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(*b*) The duties of *tunzɔp*, at Zubiuŋ: The rite of 'sowing a field' for the dead during a tendaana's funeral. One representative of each maximal lineage of the clan has to take part.

[facing p. 80]

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Duunkpalɔg in the corporate life of Zubiuŋ can be judged from the frequency of the personal name Duun. This name is given to every child placed under the spiritual guardianship of this *Bɔyar*. There is not a single family in Zubiuŋ without at least one child named Duun.

All the reciprocal duties and privileges of the three maximal lineages testify to the unity of Zubiuŋ as a clan. To cite funerals again, when a death occurs in one of the lineages it is the duty of the representatives of the other two to conduct the main rites and to give general help and supervision, according to the maxim '*sunzɔp m-maan ycla*—brother-lineages look after one's (ceremonial) affairs'. At the funeral ceremonies of the head of one of the maximal lineages it is obligatory for the other two maximal lineages to be represented by their heads, through whom they must send the prescribed food contributions. In return for their services and support these two maximal lineages are entitled to receive prescribed portions of the animals slaughtered in honour of the deceased, and of the beer and cooked food distributed at the funeral.

Ritual Differentiation and Integration of Zubiuŋ

At the same time, each maximal lineage has a large and jealously guarded measure of autonomy relative to its two *sunzɔ* lineages. This is most conspicuously embodied in the ritual office of tɛndaana (Master, or Custodian, of the Earth). Each of the three lineages has its own tɛndaana-ship, held by the head (*kpeem*) of the lineage. This office is primarily associated with the cult of the Earth (*tɛŋ*) in its mystical aspect, whose shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are the sacred spots found in profusion throughout the Mole-Dagbane culture area. An Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) may be a grove of trees, a pool, a stream, a pile of boulders, a single tree, or merely a small bare patch in the midst of cultivated fields. In the settled parts of Taleland half a mile's walk along any foot-path takes one past two or three *tɔŋgbana*, so numerous are they.

Tɔŋgbana do not all rank equally, though all are equally the shrines of the Earth. At Zubiuŋ the most important *tɔŋgbana* come under the joint custody of all three maximal lineages. On important ceremonial occasions in which the clan acts as a corporate unit, such as the installation of a new tɛndaana, all three tɛndaanas and their elders assemble to perform sacrifices at these *tɔŋgbana*. One of these, Zukɔk, is supreme over all the Earth shrines of Zubiuŋ. It symbolizes the Land of Zubiuŋ (*Zubiuŋ tɛŋ*), the local subdivision of the Earth-as-a-whole in its mystical aspect, with which Zubiuŋ is directly connected. This is another focus of clan unity.

We shall later elucidate more fully the complex relationship of these two religious foci of clan unity among the Talis. It must suffice to say that, at Zubiuŋ, Duunkpalɔg, the *Bɔyar*, and Zukɔk, symbolizing the Earth, are mystically coupled together but not identical. In doctrine and in rite they form the polar principles of a single religious system. Together they constitute the axis, as it were, around which the religious ideas and values of the natives are constructed. In relation to the structure of lineage and clan *Bɔyar* and *tɛŋ* work as complementary values and sanctions. When either is the centre of a rite or ceremony, homage is paid to the other as well. In all corporate ceremonies, such as those accompany-

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PLATE VI

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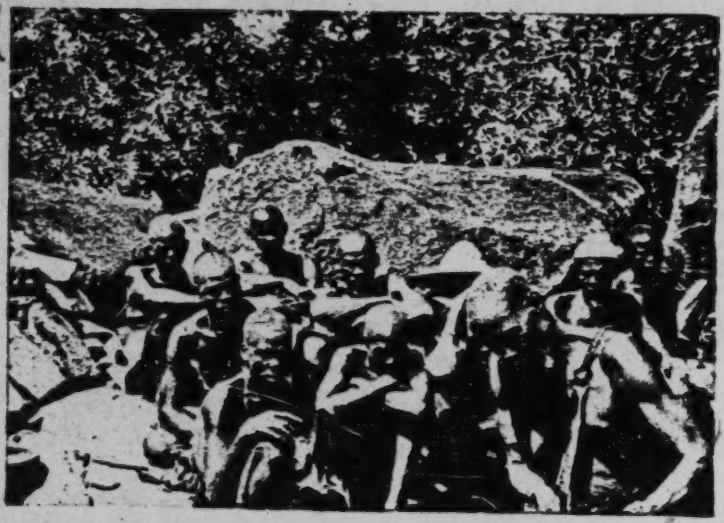

(*a*) Ritual collaboration among the Hill Talis: A sacrifice at the External *Boyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the principal custodians. Representatives of Gundaat, Samiit, Sakpee are present while the head of Kpata'ar performs the sacrifice.

(*b*) A sacrifice at the Earth Shrine, Doo, of which Kpata'ardem are the principal custodians. Representatives of Kpata'ar, Tamboog, Degal, and Bunkiuk are present on this occasion.

[facing p. 81]

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CHAPTER VII

CLANSHIP AND RITUAL COLLABORATION

The Significance of Sacrificing Together

SOCIAL ties and cleavages are most conspicuously affirmed in Tale ritual. Ritual collaboration and common ritual allegiances are indices of common interests and mechanisms of solidarity. The core of Tale ritual thought, doctrine, and performance is the sacrifice (*kaab*). In some situations a libation of water into which a handful of flour has been stirred (*zɔm kuom*, flour-water) is a sufficient sacrifice. In others, and more characteristically, domestic animals (fowls, guinea-fowls, goats, sheep, cattle, and dogs), with or without the addition of beer, are sacrificed. The selection of the animal depends on a multiplicity of factors, such as the relative importance of the shrine at which it is offered, the importance of the occasion, the status of the suppliant, or the group offering the sacrifice. No other situation evokes so vividly and so directly, both for the native and for the onlooker, the sense of the significance, for the Tallensi, of their continuity with their ancestors, and the strength and reality of the moral cohesion of such corporate units as lineages and clans.

To sacrifice together (*kab kaabɔra*) is the most binding form of ritual collaboration. According to the ethical and religious ideas of the Tallensi, it is totally incompatible with a state of hostility—that is, with an open breach of good relations. Personal feelings are of secondary importance in this connexion. One can sacrifice with a person whom one despises or dislikes, as long as these feelings do not lead to an infringement of the ties of mutual obligation. But one cannot sacrifice propitiously with someone who is an enemy. This, according to native theory, would cause the ancestors to become angry, for 'as you are towards each other so are the spirits of your ancestors towards one another'. Therefore, if avowed enemies sacrifice together, mystical retribution will follow. To sacrifice together means not only to acknowledge a common spiritual tutelage, but also to eat together of the sacrifice; in short, to unite in a sacrament. Thus it is both an expression and a pledge of mutual amity and dependence.

Ritual Relations in Namoo Clans

As our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis has shown, the final barrier to the complete absorption of an accessory lineage into one of the sub-clans is its exclusion from sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the sub-clan. This is the disability that excludes accessory lineages from the right to hold the chiefship of the sub-clan. But accessory lineages participate in sacrifices to the shrine of the ancestor who is regarded as the founder of that segment of the sub-clan to which they are attached or assimilated. The shrine (*bɔyar*) of the founding ancestor of the sub-clan is usually in the custody of one of its segments, whose head (*kpeem*)

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has, by right of succession, the duty of sacrificing to it on behalf of the whole sub-clan. Whenever sacrifice is made, all the segments of the authentic lineage must be represented. Accessory lineages are not represented, but they regard the representatives of the authentic segments to which they are linked as representing them also.

Thus, Nəŋsuur yidɛm, of Tongo, are assimilated to the authentic segment of Siiyɛŋ yiri, and are present at sacrifices made to the founding ancestor of Siiyɛŋ yiri. But no member of Nəŋsuur yidɛm could ever succeed to the custody of Siiyɛŋ's *bɔyar*. Now when sacrifice is made to Mosuor's *bɔyar* on behalf of the whole sub-clan, representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri must be present; and Nəŋsuur yidɛm, who cannot be present, regard these representatives of Siiyɛŋ yiri as representing them as well. This view is justified, for when the portion of the sacrificial animal which falls to the share of Siiyɛŋ yiri is divided out, some will be given to Nəŋsuur yidɛm also 'to cook and set out for their ancestor spirits (*kpiinam*).' As it is expressly forbidden for anyone not a member of the clan or the wife of a member to eat of this meat, this obviously signifies an acknowledgement of the indirect religious dependence of Nəŋsuur yidɛm on the ancestors of the authentic lineage to which they are structurally linked. Though formally barred from the sacrament by the dogma of agnatic descent, accessory lineages are in practice indirectly admitted to it.

This arrangement is thoroughly in keeping with Tale ideas of the representation of corporate units. But where the centripetal forces of co-operation and solidarity within the local community are as great as at Tongo, it is an unstable compromise. In all secular affairs, and in other ceremonial and ritual events, the accessory lineages exercise all the duties and privileges that spring from solidarity and fellowship. They cannot be rigidly barred from the crowning ritual act that witnesses to the solidarity of the sub-clan, and most categorically pledges its constituent units to amity and co-operation. We have seen how this results in pressure to admit the accessory lineages to the cult of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, exerted indirectly by them but supported vigorously also by the most powerful agent of cohesion in the sub-clan, the chief. The unity of the sub-clan in practical affairs is evidently felt to be negatived by the ritual discrimination against some of its elements.

In other Namoo clans the correlation of ritual collaboration with the jural and material aspects of clanship is even closer. At Dkoog, for instance, the attached lineage, Alaa biis, participate in all sacrifices to the shrine of the clan's founding ancestor, but they are prohibited from holding the chiefship. Politically and locally Alaa biis form an integral part of Dkoog, even though they intermarry with the two segments to which they are not attached. But their strongest bond of unity with the authentic branches of the clan is their right to take part in the cult of the clan *bɔyar*. This has been made easier by the fact that the custody of this *bɔyar* is vested in Abɔkrə biis, the segment to whose 'sister's son' Alaa biis trace their origin. It can be interpreted as an extension of the right to participate in the cult of the founding ancestor of Abɔkrə biis. One sign of the close social affiliation of Alaa biis to Dkoog is that they do not participate in the sacrifices of the Wakii lineage with which they are linked by ties of

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clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be made at the External *Bɔyar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External *Bɔyar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔyar* among the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔyar* of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔyar* is kept at the house of the segment head in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔyar* of one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔyar* itself consists of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔyar and the Earth

A. *Zubiuŋ*. We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔyar*, Duunkpalag, the common shrine of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the cults of the *Bɔyar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpalag *Bɔyar*. It is described as an External *Bɔyar* (*yɛŋha bɔyar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔyar*, 'the *bɔyar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

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bɔyar, again, is both literally and socially the domestic replica of the External *Bɔyar*. It is kept at the homestead of the lineage head, and it symbolizes the particular ancestors of that lineage only. Only that particular lineage offers sacrifices through its head to its *dugni bɔyar*, that is, to its own ancestors; all three lineages meet at Duunkpalɔg in ritual homage to all their ancestors. (The *dugni bɔyar* of a Zubiuŋ lineage, as among all the Talis, consists of two small pots embedded in a projecting bulge of the outside wall of the house, together with other sacred paraphernalia, and, as usual, smeared all over with the dried flour, blood, and feathers of many sacrifices.)

The two aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult mark the two poles of clan structure—on the one hand, the relative autonomy of the constituent lineages of the clan; on the other, the unity and the solidarity of the clan, synthesizing these relative autonomies in a wider field of social organization, but according to the same principles of structure that operate to constitute these relatively autonomous units. Though less explicitly, the same pattern of ritual collaboration obtains at Zubiuŋ with respect to the cult of the Earth.

The lineages of other clans with which Zubiuŋ has ties of clanship never participate in sacrifices at Duunkpalɔg or at any of the Zubiuŋ Earth shrines. A linked lineage has ritual ties only with the Zubiuŋ maximal lineage to which it is directly linked, but these ties are very elastic. Thus, in situations in which the corporate identity of one of the constituent maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ is emphasized—for example, in the ceremonies of inducting a new tendaana into his office, or in the funeral rites of a deceased tendaana—members of the linked lineages of that group are nominally obliged to participate in the exoteric phases of the ceremonies. This obligation, however, is not so rigorous as in the case of the other Zubiuŋ lineages.

B. *Ba'ari*. The pattern of ritual collaboration between the component units of Ba'ari is slightly different. There the focal shrine of the clan is the principal sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) consecrated to the Earth, Ba'at Da'a. Important sacrifices there, particularly during the Great Festivals, require the presence of all the constituent lineages of Ba'ari, including the accessory lineages. This is not regarded as inconsistent with the fact that one of the attached lineages, Ba'at-Guŋ, is permitted to intermarry with two of the other lineages, though otherwise exercising the rights and obligations of close *sunsɔŋ*. Ba'ari lacks the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, and the lineage (*dugni*) *bɔyar* of each of its constituent lineages is associated with Ba'at Da'a, which doubles the functions of an External *Bɔyar* and a focal *tɔŋgban*. Ba'at Da'a has, in fact, two ritual aspects. In its esoteric aspect it is the ideological pivot around which the clan revolves. Only the clan takes part in the cult associated with this aspect; linked lineages of other clans have no share in it. It also has an exoteric aspect connected with certain phases of the cycle of the Great Festivals. Again, linked lineages take no part in the ritual that defines this aspect. But the people of Gbizug have a formal role in these rites, and so have Wakii and Yayazuor, who are *sunsɔŋ*-by-courtesy. These clans participate, not in virtue of ties of clanship with Ba'ari, but by reason of their ritual bonds. They have a

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general ritual bond in the tendaanaship and the special ritual relationship with the Earth which this office imposes on a group that has the prerogative of it, and they have a specific ritual bond that comes into action during the Great Festivals.

At the level of these ritual relations, Ba'ari, Gbizug, Wakii, and Yayazuor are brethren (*mabiis*) to one another. Gbizug, it will be remembered, is also linked to Ba'ari by clanship ties; through it, therefore, the scheme of linkage by clanship ties is interlocked with the scheme of linkage through ritual ties; and the myth in which the social relations of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are symbolically pictured expresses this double-sided interdependence. As will be clearer presently, the organization of ritual ties between corporate units, like that of clanship ties, follows the field principle. Working at different levels of the social structure in the service of different interests, the two systems are interlocked but not congruent. They reinforce each other by counterbalancing each other; and both kinds of ties are translated into the basic idiom of Tale social relations, the idiom of genealogical connexion.

C. *Gbizug.* We shall see this more clearly if we consider the role of Gbizug in this configuration. As we have noted before, linked maximal lineages have the right to participate in exoteric ceremonies (such as funeral ceremonies) in which the corporate identity of the particular Ba'ari lineage with which they have clanship ties emerges; but clanship ties do not give them the right to take part in the religious cults in which the corporate unity and identity of the whole clan emerges. They have no bonds with the clan as a whole, but only with the relatively autonomous segments of the clan. Gbizug, however, is bound to a segment of the clan by clanship ties and to the whole clan by ritual ties, and the bridge between these two sets of ties is Ba'at-Sakpar. Gbizug has no loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari, other than Ba'at-Sakpar, on the level of clanship; in this respect Gbizug is a threat to the stability of Ba'at-Sakpar's field of clanship. The latter's loyalties to Gbizug might in certain circumstances clash with its loyalties to the rest of Ba'ari. Compromise and adjustment are made possible by the scheme of ritual ties. The partly independent fields of clanship of Gbizug and Ba'at-Sakpar are adjusted to one another at a different level of social organization. In the frame of ritual relations, Gbizug is, as it were, assimilated to the whole clan of Ba'ari, drawn into the field of clanship of Ba'at-Sakpar.

It follows that on this plane of ritual relations Gbeog and Zubiun-Yakora are indirectly bound to the whole of Ba'ari, for Gbizug represents its whole field of clanship in its corporate ritual relationship with Ba'ari. At a further remove Zubiun Yakora is the bridge between the whole of Zubiun and the whole of Ba'ari through Gbizug; and this rule extends, by a series of removes, to all the Talis.

The Underlying Principles of Ritual Collaboration

We must try to see clearly the principles underlying this bewildering hierarchy of social ties between corporate units in Taleland. It is as difficult to state this principle simply and precisely as it was for the writer to elicit it from the confusing and, at first sight, inconsistent welter of

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of these, in turn, on the mystical power of the Earth. Its chief theme, through all the rites and ceremonies of the festival, is a plea for the beneficence of the Earth in the approaching farming season. Though the chief actors are the Hill Talis, it is a festival in which all the Tallensi take part, directly or through representative ritual functionaries, since they are all under the mystical jurisdiction of the Earth; and it seeks to mobilize the goodwill of the Earth for the prosperity and fertility of all the people of the country.

At the other end of the agricultural season, when the harvest has been gathered, comes the complementary Harvest Festival of *Bɔɣaraam*, as it is called by the Hill Talis. As the name suggests, this festival is centred on the External *Bɔɣar* and is dominated by the cult of the ancestors. It is celebrated independently by each *Bɔɣar* congregation, not in common, as the *Gɔlib* is. The Namoos, and the other Talis, also have their Harvest Festivals at about the same time; and all have the same theme. They are dramatizations of man's gratitude for the crops that the soil, under man's labouring hand, has yielded, for the children that have been born, and for the welfare that has been granted to men by the Earth and the ancestors. Through all the rites and ceremonies runs the reiterated prayer that the ancestors and the Earth may unite to grant long life to men so that they may enjoy these and further blessings of the same kind.

The natives sum up the relationship between *Bɔɣar* and *Tɛŋ* in the following formula. The *Bɔɣar*, they say, rests on the Earth and cannot act without it; but the Earth would be derelict without men, the children of the ancestors whose spiritual abode is the *Bɔɣar*. The sacredness of the Earth is due to the fact that men live on its surface, tend it, and worship it.

Both the Earth cult and the *Bɔɣar* cult have a parochial aspect and a universal aspect. There are the particular *Bɔɣar* and Earth shrines, each exclusively worshipped by its own defined congregation and bearing its own name; and there are the universal cults of which these are the local embodiments. This is plain both in native comment and in the forms of rites and ceremonies. The natives say that all Talis *Bɔɣa* (including not only those of the Hill Talis but those of Zubiuŋ and other Talis of the Plain as well) are 'one and the same thing'.

So when a sacrifice is offered at a particular *Bɔɣar*, the officiant in his invocation calls upon all the Talis *Bɔɣa*, enumerating them by name, to 'gather together and accept this sacrifice'. Similarly, while every *Bɔɣar* has its own name—Bona'ab, Wannii, Samoo, and so forth—they also have the generic name of Tɔŋna'ab.[1] The *Bɔɣa* of all the Talis clans are

[1] Some of these names have obvious meanings, others have none, or have lost all semblance of meaningful forms. Bona'ab means 'Chief of Things', i.e. Great Benefactor; Samoo means 'the (uncultivated) bush at Soog', presumably because in the distant past the shrine was surrounded by uncultivated bush; Wannii can only be given a meaning by twisting the first syllable into a phonetically analogous meaningful form. Tɔŋna'ab breaks up into the two syllables *tɔŋ* (from which Tongo takes its name) which is cognate with *tɛŋ*, the Earth (cf. *tɔŋgban*, earth shrine, lit. surface of the Earth) and *na'ab*, chief. It means, therefore, Chief of the Earth, or in other words, Lord of the Country. And to the Hill Talis their *Bɔɣɔr* cult *is* the most important religious phenomenon in the world.

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'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔya* of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of every Talən's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔyar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔyar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔyar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔyar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔyar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔyar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkəra*)'.

Bɔyar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔyar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

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weather causes anxiety about the crops; for famine is the greatest social calamity they can imagine and is a very real menace. I have heard people speak of the last great famine that swept the country, some forty years ago, with a poignancy that made one realize how deeply dread of famine is stamped into the native's outlook on life. 'It is our black man's thing this (*ti gbansablɛg yɛl n-a-de*)', they say, 'from the days of our fathers and forefathers'—or, as we might put it, it is a law of nature for the black man. 'The white man has saved us. If there is hunger now we can buy grain from Mampurugu or Kusaa.' Sombrely they describe how in times of famine people ate grass and weeds fit only for animals, and died on the footpaths. Men deserted wife and child to seek sustenance among distant relatives who had a little food. They took their own children to sell into slavery among the Mamprusi for food. The social order broke down completely.

Sufficient crops of the staple cereals mean survival, good crops mean joy to the Tallensi. They show it in the Harvest Festival that marks the end of the farming year. If the harvest is poor, they say, people attend the dances perfunctorily and dance without enthusiasm. But in a good year, as I saw in 1936, no one can be held back from the dances. Young mothers steal out to them with their babes in their arms, sedate elders fling themselves into the rout with the zest and energy of striplings. There is a general feeling of elation. 'Our bodies are full of strength (*ti nɛŋ kpɛŋŋa*)', is how the natives describe it.

A successful farming year not only provides for the satisfaction of the fundamental physical needs of existence; it gives security to the social order. There is ample evidence of this in the busy and cheerful atmosphere of the market-places, and, more significantly, in the spate of ceremonial activities that follows on a satisfactory harvest; for all Tale ceremonial activities express and fortify relationships of amity and interdependence. For the individual the physical well-being of himself and his dependants—sufficiency of food, good health, and the increase of offspring—is a sign that all is well with the social order. The ritual symbols in which the forces that shape Tale social organization and keep it on a steady course are objectified and made emotionally tangible go back to this fact of native experience. The stereotyped formula with which a prayer offered at any shrine is usually concluded epitomizes this: 'Grant that fields be farmed (fruitfully), that live-stock breed, that offspring be born, that (undisturbed) sleep be slept (*Kye ka kuo kɔ, ka guul guul, ka dɔŋam dɔŋa, ka guom gbis*).'

Productive Efficiency and the Bounds set by Nature

Now what does the achievement of sufficiency of food and general physical well-being depend upon? It is quite clear, from the way the natives carry on their agricultural activities and the way they think and talk about them that, other things being equal, they consider skill and industry to be the main factors of efficiency. But variations in efficiency between a *pùkpaa*, a slothful farmer, and a proper *kpa'at*, an industrious hoe-man, mean only a difference in their respective standards of consumption. One has rather less food and other goods than the other.

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Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

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or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *u* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

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In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walag*) such difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's dependants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound [illegible] wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the

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ritual custody of a particular clan or maximal lineage. Such a territorial section is the *tɛŋ* of a particular tɛndaana. He is the master (*daana*) of that locality (*tɛŋ*), exercising ritual jurisdiction over it on behalf of the maximal lineage or clan which has the ritual ownership of it, in virtue of being the head of that unit. He is the mediator between the Earth and the people whose interests lie in that fraction of its physical surface. When the concept *tɛŋ* is coupled with a tɛndaana it has a double meaning. It denotes both a stretch of territory and a place of contact with the mystical Earth. It may be used to designate a single Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) and its precincts, a total area of anything from about 20 square yards to an acre or two; and it can be applied to the whole of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*, which includes a number of *tɔŋgbana*.

Tɛndaanas' *tɛs* vary greatly in extent. As I have no exact measurements, I can only indicate roughly the range of differences. Small *tɛs* are the rule in the older and more densely settled part of the country. The area of a clan settlement on Tɛnzugu, for instance, perhaps a square mile altogether, may be divided amongst three or four tɛndaanas. On the other hand, at the peripheries tɛndaanas have ritual jurisdiction over large tracts of land, many square miles in extent. This is largely due to the absence of permanent settlement in these parts until recently, and the still relatively scanty population living there.

Tallensi do not think of a tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* in terms of its size but in terms of its position relatively to the *tɛs* of neighbouring tɛndaanas. Tɛndaanas themselves claim that their *tɛs* have definite boundaries, but when asked to show them they become very uneasy and quote the maxim 'The boundaries of a *tɛŋ* must not be pointed out (*Tɛŋɔn tɛntɔris pu pa'ana*)'. When my bona fides was, at length, accepted by the Tallensi I was able to persuade several tɛndaanas to have the boundaries of their *tɛs* shown to me. My guides were always ill at ease, and apparently felt that what they were doing verged on sacrilege. Chiefs and elders of clans that do not have tɛndaanas usually declare that it is impossible for tɛndaanas to have boundaries (cf. p. 164); for are not neighbouring tɛndaanas always 'kin' (*mabiis*)—by clanship or by ritual ties? Do they not often sacrifice together at one another's Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) or go by stealth, at night, to sacrifice at a neighbouring tɛndaana's Earth shrines? Tɛndaanas do not deny this. In every group of contiguous maximal lineages, each presided over by a tɛndaana (as for instance Gbeog, Gbizug, and Zubiuŋ), the senior tɛndaana (in this instance the Gbizug tɛndaana) always claims to be the real 'owner' of the aggregate of *tɛs* held by the group of tɛndaanas. He talks of this aggregate of *tɛs* as if it were one *tɛŋ* apportioned amongst his junior 'brothers' and himself for the greater convenience of performing the priestly duties of the tɛndaanaship. They divide their common spiritual jurisdiction rather than a distinct stretch of territory; and in principle this rule embraces the whole of Taleland. For the powers of the Earth are indivisible, the Earth is a unity. When the Gbizug tɛndaana sacrifices to his supreme *tɔŋgban*—or, as he often phrases it, his *tɛŋ*—Kpɔŋkparəg, he invokes all the important *tɔŋgbana* of Taleland, up to the limit of the field of politico-ritual relations in which Gbizug participates, from Duusi in the north-east to Biuŋ in the south.

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gradually with the passage of generations in adjustment to changing social boundaries.

It is significant how frequently in settlements like Tongo tɛndaanas' boundaries are adjusted to cognatic ties between a particular tɛndaana's clan and a segment of the immigrant clan. In Tongo all Dekpiɛŋ, barring two or three homesteads, is on Zubiuŋ land; there is not one segment of Dekpiɛŋ that has no cognatic or affinal ties with Zubiuŋ. The few men who live on Gbizug land are all matrilateral kin of Gbizug. All Kuorəg is on Soog land; and the Kuorəg tradition is that one of their ancestors was a Soog *ahɔŋ* (sister's son) who was granted land to settle on by his *ahɔb* (maternal uncle), the Soog tɛndaana. Similarly, Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Puhug call themselves the classificatory sister's sons of Gbizug, and most of them live on Gbizug land. This is a further indication that the ill-defined boundaries of tɛndaanas' *tɛɛ* are shaped by social relationships.

Not all Namoos live on land under the ritual jurisdiction of other clans. The Chief of Biuŋ, though a Namoo, is also the tɛndaana of Biuŋ. The people of Dkoog live on land under their own tɛndaana, a member of their own clan. They have both a chief and a tɛndaana.[1] In these cases the natives maintain that the original settlers of their clan found no one living there. Being Namoos they brought the chiefship with them, or, as at Biuŋ, held the chiefly rights over the bush out of which Biuŋ has been carved. But the Earth cannot go unworshipped where men dwell; so they undertook the tɛndaanaship themselves.

A tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* is the area in which he exercises priestly duties and responsibilities and the rights and privileges that correspond to them. It is primarily on behalf of the people dwelling or farming there that he constantly consults diviners to find out what sacrifices he must offer in order that the Earth may bless the strivings of men. Lost and unclaimed property or objects found anywhere on his *tɛŋ* must be delivered to him, to be used by him or sacrificed to the Earth. If anybody wishes to build a house on a virgin site, even on farm-land belonging to his own lineage, the blessing of the Earth is essential if the house is to prosper. Therefore the tɛndaana of that *tɛŋ* must come and 'clear the house-site (*kuo yir*)' ritually for the family, receiving, in return, only certain prescribed portions of the meat of the animals sacrificed. If a new grave has to be dug, the tɛndaana, or someone deputizing for him, has to mark it out ritually (*kyieb*) and supervise the digging. This is not only because the dead are laid to rest inside the earth, but also because interring the dead is an act of crucial social and personal importance, charged with ritual meanings of great intensity. It is one of the points at which man's life and the mystical powers of the Earth come into contact in a way that is fraught with the deepest affective and social meaning for the individual and wide consequences for the organization of the society. Thereafter,

[1] But, characteristically, the tɛndaanaship is vested in one segment only of the clan, and that segment is prohibited from holding the chiefship. Moreover, their right to the tɛndaanaship and their exclusion from the chiefship are both validated by their lineage status. They form an attached lineage claiming matrilateral descent from a lineage of Wakii that has the tɛndaanaship. The chiefship is confined to the authentic lineages of Dkoog. Thus the polar relation of chiefship and tɛndaanaship asserts itself within the clan.

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one who was human (*vor*) becomes a spirit (*kpiim*). For this service, too, the tendaana receives only prescribed portions of the sacrificial animals. If a man wants to break virgin land for cultivation, he requires the consent of the tendaana in whose *teŋ* the land lies. Unless the tendaana comes to cut the boundaries (*kie*) of the farm, its cultivation will bring nothing but disaster on the farmer. The tendaana's reward is, again, only a portion of the sacrifices and occasional gifts of grain in subsequent years. Lastly, there are the circumstances in which a tendaana must be called upon to make peace between man and the Earth. The weightiest of these is in the case of blood shed in strife, whether the victim dies or not. Atonement sacrifices must be offered by both parties through the tendaana of the *teŋ* where the blood was shed, and, in clans that have the tendaanaship, through their own tendaanas as well. There are also less heinous sacrileges and even venial sins—such as wearing cloth garments near certain *tɔŋgbana*—for which small atonement sacrifices must be offered through the tendaana; and there are some minor accidents which must be ritually cancelled out by a sacrifice to the Earth. If a house burns down, for example, it is thought of as a quasi-mystical disaster, like a failure of one's crops, and the fire must be ritually 'quenched' by the tendaana, after it has been physically put out.

For all these ritual services, which tendaanas regard both as duties that can be neglected only at peril of life and as rights indicating their status and ritual jurisdiction, no payment is given other than portions of the sacrifices. To people with the standard of living of the Tallensi the value of such perquisites is by no means negligible. It is a common saying that all tendaanas are gluttons and that they are never short of meat. Cynics say that the office of tendaana is coveted for the meat it brings in. We must remember, however, that when we speak of a tendaana here it would be more appropriate to speak of a tendaana and his lineage or clan. For a tendaana can and frequently does send one or more of his clansmen to deputize for him and sometimes even delegates some of his duties to cognates not of his clan; and the rewards of his services must be shared with them and with his close agnates.

Certain taboos of the Earth are obligatory on all tendaanas. Thus it is a taboo for cloth garments to be worn in the vicinity of any of the important *tɔŋgbana* like Doo or of the homesteads of all except a few tendaanas. My clothing was a constant embarrassment to tendaanas even after they had resigned themselves to my European shortcomings. As tendaanas can never lay aside their priestly bonds with the Earth, they may never wear cloth. Instead, they wear dressed skins of domestic or wild ungulates. A tendaana dressed in his finest skins on a solemn occasion has an appearance of hieratic dignity that is most impressive.

There are also, as we have learnt (cf. p. 142), local *teŋ* taboos obligatory on everybody who lives on that *teŋ*, and serving to mark it off from other *teŋ*. Among the commonest are the prohibition against using red ochre (*tandayanze'e*) for plastering the homestead or grass for roofing it, and the taboos against killing certain reptiles. In the observance of these taboos, as in their compliance with all the obligations and observances connected with the Earth, Tallensi are extremely conscientious. In consequence,

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of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔyar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔyada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛyahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔyada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛyahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔyada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zəŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Seyahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zəŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contraposition between Kuorəg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zəŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yərug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated, contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yərug Yin had been the head of Bɔyada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

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or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things. When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or ceremonially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numət*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides. Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

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four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior (*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔɣar* and Sɛɣahəg's grave and *bɔɣar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt beside Tendaan Genət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing-ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tendaan Genət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor biis—Mosuor, Sɛɣahəg, and Bɔɣada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tendaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bayar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

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PLATE XII

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(*a*) The head of a medial lineage, Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, about to sacrifice to the lineage *bɔyar* on formally taking over the headship of the lineage. The *bɔyar* is in front of him in the broken pottery vessel.

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(*b*) A sacrifice to the *dugni* (maximal lineage) *bɔyar* of one of the component maximal lineages of Zulɲuŋ. Only elders of the lineage are present.

[facing p. 225]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation, for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death, when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort. They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *bɔyar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
182 sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines. And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the [224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the [769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *bɔyar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *bɔyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
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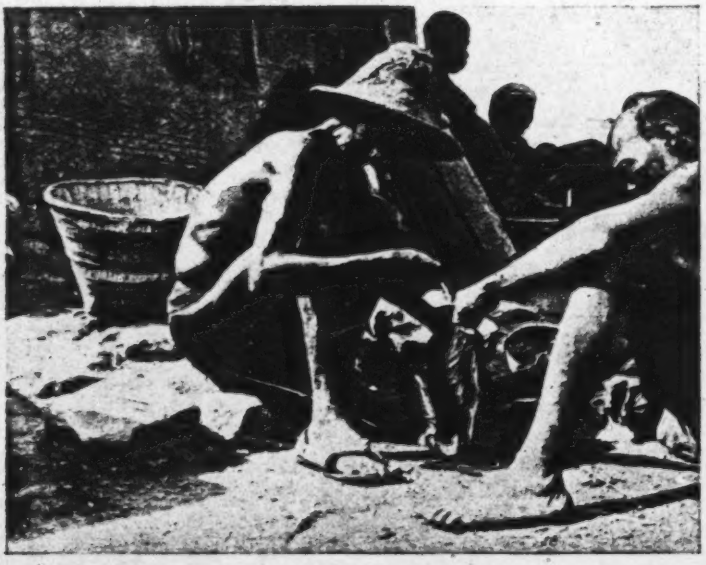
PLATE XIV



(*a*) *Sunzɔp m-maan yɛla.* A Gbizug elder performs a ritual service for Zubiuŋ-Yakora by sewing the sheepskin loin cover for the dead at a funeral.

(*b*) Elders representing all the component maximal lineages of Ba'ari assemble for the burial rites of the Ba'at-Sakpar tɛndaana at his homestead.

[facing p. 24]

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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This aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult had great economic and social importance, in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔɣar*, that is, the Primordial Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔɣar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to the client village of representatives of the Tali lineage which is its sponsor with the *Bɔɣar* tó which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔɣar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔɣar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔɣar* cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes to lay before the *Bɔɣar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔɣar*. They receive the right to

[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔɣar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

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788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
●782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or misdeeds.

431 This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
788 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
471 lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country, recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his
[595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other
[595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

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PLATE 2

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a. The domestic family is the matrix of kinship. A family party out lifting ground-nuts on the home farm. Their homestead is in the background. From right to left: the head of the family, his infant daughter, his adult son, the latter's wife and baby, the family head's wife and daughter

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b. A domestic sacrifice: cleaning and apportioning the meat of the goat at the conclusion of the sacrifice. Banan-Teroog, his senior wife, and his junior wife's two children. The old woman is holding a chicken ready for the next sacrifice

[FACING P. 33]

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ingress of wild animals—in particular, the ubiquitous and thievish hyena, which prowls the settlements at night in search of offal and unprotected small stock—and the egress of their own livestock. Every gateway in Taleland must be barred at night, except that of the Chief of Tongo. This is a strict rule, and it is one of the conventions defining the social personality of the Chief of Tongo. It is also a sign of the privacy of the domestic unit in respect of the intimate life of its members.

Entering the *zanɔr* of a homestead, the visitor finds himself in the *sapak* or *nayaŋ*, the cattle-yard. It is the dirtiest and most insanitary spot in the homestead, its undressed surface being strewn with rubbish and with the dung or droppings of livestock, if the owner has any. One often sees human excrement in a corner, for young children and sick people defecate there at night. Ɔndieso is a very poor man, even by Tale standards, as the sagging roofs and dilapidated walls of his homestead lead one to suspect, possessing neither cattle nor sheep nor goats, and but a handful of poultry. Hence his *sapak* is very small, less than a dozen square yards in area. Ɔndieso's neighbour, the Gbizug tɛndaana, has a large *sapak*, about 80 square yards in area; but he has cattle, sheep, goats, and a couple of donkeys, not to speak of many fowls and guinea-fowls.

From the *sapak* one can see how the cylindrical rooms are laid out and distributed in the roughly circular or oval area occupied by the homestead. The first room, usually on the right as one enters through the *zanɔr*, is the *zɔŋ*. It is the only room with a doorway in the *sapak*, and it has a special significance in the structure of the house. It is the room *par excellence* of the head of the house (*yirdaana*), fittingly placed between the open space before the *zanɔr*, with which his public activities are associated, and the *sapak*, which shelters his most valuable possessions, his livestock. Cattle, sheep, and goats constitute material wealth, the repository of labour and thrift; but they mean much more than that to the Talaŋ. They are pre-eminently the property of men, associated with men's major interests. They are the medium by means of which wives are acquired, and thus posterity assured. They are also the principal objects of sacrifice, by means of which the natives maintain their relations with their ancestor spirits and other mystical powers. In bad weather the *zɔŋ* itself is used to shelter the livestock. Inside the *zɔŋ*, along the wall, little cubicles are made for the *yirdaana*'s fowls to nest in. A man of substance often has a double *zɔŋ*, consisting of two chambers with a low doorway in the partition wall. The rear chamber is used as a stall for young calves or sheep, and the front chamber, communicating with the *sapak*, as a stall for a milch-cow or a donkey, for the night.

The *zɔŋ* is identified with the *yirdaana*'s status and social personality. It is a bare room, for a man does not keep valuable possessions, weapons,

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the *zɔŋ*, they symbolize the continuity of the lineage of which the master of that house is but one member, a link in a process to which he makes his greatest contribution as a father and head of a house. Hence the *zɔŋ* of a lineage head, being the sanctuary of all the lineage ancestors, is regarded as the *zɔŋ* of the whole lineage, and his *zanɔr* as the *zanɔr* of the lineage. When the Hill Talis were forcibly expelled in 1910–11 and their homesteads demolished, the heads of the maximal lineages later came back by stealth to rebuild a small part of their *zɔŋ* walls, for they could not appropriately sacrifice to their lineage ancestors elsewhere than in the lineage *zɔŋ*. If a woman commits adultery, she sins against her husband's lineage ancestors, thus imperilling the health and welfare of her husband and children. An adulteress, that is to say, transgresses the rights over her reproductive powers vested absolutely in her husband's lineage. Thus, if a woman is suspected of adultery she is subjected to the ordeal of entering (*kpe*) the lineage *zɔŋ* or *zanɔr*. She must face the ancestors directly, for she has committed an outrage against the lineage principle the absolute value of which is symbolized in and safeguarded by the ancestor spirits.[1] If she is guilty and does not confess, she will get ill and perhaps die. Women are terrified of this ordeal, which rarely fails to produce a confession.

Though they come and go freely in the *sapak* and *zɔŋ* in the ordinary course of domestic life, the women and children belong specifically to the domestic quarters proper. These lie behind a low wall (*yɛbəg*) a yard or so in height and about the same in length, at the back of the *sapak*. This wall usually runs between the back of a kitchen or storeroom and a large bullet-shaped chamber from 7 to 10 feet high and 6 to 10 feet in diameter at the base. This is the granary (*buur*). One suffices for a small family like Ondieso's. A wealthier man with a more numerous household may have one principal granary and one or more smaller ones. A granary has only one opening, at the top, covered with a lid of tightly plaited thatch like an enormous hat.

In the granary, again, Tale architecture embodies a fundamental element in the structure of the domestic unit. A bird's-eye view of a Tale homestead would show the principal granary as standing roughly in the centre of the circle of rooms, rising like a beacon between that section of the homestead which in use, thought, and feeling is the domain of the men, and that section which forms the living-quarters and is ruled by the women. The granary is the pivot on which the smooth working of the domestic unit turns. It holds the millet and guinea corn which provide the staple food of the natives. Without this, life cannot be satisfactorily sustained from one harvest to the next, and the household cannot exist, let alone keep its unity. What a sufficiency of food means to the Tallensi has been described in our previous

[1] This is the complementary notion to that of 'polluting the room' described above, p. 28.

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PLATE 8

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a. A domestic sacrifice of fowls, guinea-fowls, and beer. The head of the joint family is addressing the shrine, which occupies a recess in his senior wife's *Dug*

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b. Omara and his four youngest daughters—each the daughter of a different wife—having a snack at mid-day

[FACING p. 129]

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593 602 family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened, clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly, a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death, or his distress at the illness of his own child.

613 602 This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The [782] fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role even during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambe, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaanzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage

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ma-kpeem, fem.) are a foil to those of parents and children. It is convenient here to state the range within which grandparents are acknowledged. On both the mother's side and the father's side grandparents are primarily one's own parent's own parents. The terms are extended to own grandparents' siblings (in particular to a grandfather's brothers) and their wives, but rarely beyond that limit, and never, in my experience, beyond a grandfather's agnatic cousin. This is correlated with the cycle of development of the joint family. By the time a man has grandchildren he is not likely to be still sharing a homestead with his brother, let alone cousin, and his classificatory siblings will have only a formal interest in his grandchildren.

The diagram on p. 148 sums up this discussion of the range of parenthood acknowledged by the Tallensi.

The Significance of 'Having no Father alive'

Clearly the formula 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage' covers a complicated tissue of social relationships. Another aspect of it appears in the significance Tallensi attach to whether or not one's father is alive.

This is a matter of considerable practical importance, more particularly for men, but also for women. A person's status in his clan, and in every segment of it to which he belongs, depends largely on whether 'his father is alive (*u ba be*)' or not (*u ba ka*). It is correlated with the distribution of jural and ritual authority and responsibility in the lineage. During his own father's lifetime a person's status is submerged in that of his father for jural and ritual purposes. He comes directly under his father's authority, as we shall see presently. He attains his first degree of independence only on the death of his own father. This is shown to some extent in every department of his life, but most significantly in the sphere of ritual. A man cannot make sacrifices to his patrilineal ancestors in his own right while his own father is alive. His father does this on his behalf. It is only when his father dies that a man can sacrifice directly to his ancestors; for such sacrifices can only be offered through the medium of his father's spirit.

This marks a very important stage in a man's social maturation, whatever his chronological age may be. Henceforth the responsibility for keeping the goodwill of his ancestors rests directly on his own shoulders. It will be he himself, for instance, not his father, who decides whether a sacrifice demanded by such-and-such an ancestor should be offered at once or postponed. And with this first stage of ritual responsibility usually goes some degree of autonomy in jural and economic matters, as we shall see presently. Nevertheless, no man attains full autonomy within the limits of the lineage system until he is altogether 'fatherless'. While he has a proxy or classificatory father alive he is still to some extent under paternal authority. It is worth

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or father's [illegible] brother's son is still alive would not claim to be fatherless. [illegible] matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation to [illegible] units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the [illegible] of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔyar* of Soog. When Sɛbəg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔyabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sɛbəg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔyar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔyabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bɔyabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔyar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*nɔkiha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten, by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

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when they were left as heads of their lineage segments they had to come home. Their fathers' spirits would have killed them if they had not done so. Dɛma is frankly happy to be home again amongst his own people after his wanderings. Pal, who is dependent on farming for his living, still speaks with a tinge of regret of the fine farm he had to abandon in Mampurugu. But he feels that he had no option, and there is even an element of pride in his submission to the *force majeure* of his dead father, since he is now the head of his lineage segment. It was the same with Na'abzɔ, Kayar, Yinworəb, Baŋgam-Teroog, and many others, too numerous to mention, who returned home after years abroad in order to 'give water' to their fathers.

While the whole ancestor cult is an elaborate expression of filial piety towards the dead parents, one of the commonest ways in which the observer comes across it is in the practice of leechcraft. Almost every native owns some 'roots (*ŋaŋa*)' for the treatment of sickness, and the therapeutic value of the roots lies not so much in their physical properties as in the fact that their owner is able, by right of ownership, to mobilize magical virtue in their support. As a preliminary to the curative rites the owner of the roots always calls upon his or her ancestors for a blessing, and this opens with the phrase 'My father, I shall call you (first). You have no concern with this matter, but I call on you (to help me) for the sake of begetting, because you begot me (*Mba, n-na mbuola nyɛni. Nyɛn baha ka dɛni, ka mbuoli la dɔŋam la zug, nyɛn dɔŋɔm la zugu*).'

Naturally the ritual aspect of filial piety is of greater importance for a man than for a woman, considered in terms of their social personalities and with regard to the father; for he stands for the lineage and clan, with all that membership of these units implies, for the land and other patrimonial property, and for the ancestral home (*daboog*). But it is important for a woman, too, and in relation to the mother as well. A woman is the spiritual ward (*sɛŋɔraan*) of one of her paternal forbears and remains under that ancestor's or ancestress's guardianship all her life. And it is through her father that she maintains good ritual relations with her ancestor guardian—either through sacrifices made by her father on her behalf or through the intermediation of her father's spirit when he is dead. Moreover, her father's spirit is of great importance to her children. It is significant that if a male line dies out a female survivor takes on the duty of sacrificing to the lineage shrines, which she can only approach through her father's spirit.

A man's mother's spirit is of as much importance for him as an individual as his father's. He has a shrine dedicated to her and other shrines dedicated to ancestors of hers. A mother's shrine is often the first after his *Yin* shrine to be dedicated by a man and is always felt to be more peculiarly his own than a father's shrine, which is heritable by half-brothers. A man would not return from abroad because of the demands

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593 866 *doo*, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the [864] suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations between their parents.

868 866 602 As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too, as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize, inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*) or uncle (*ahəb*), but sometimes his father's *ahəb* or some other kinsman of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Talən can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to [782] take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage *bɔyar* as a thank-offering.

866 593 The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the *yir* in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads, at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

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In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔyakiis sayabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahɔŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Sayawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Sayawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔyayabəlɔg-kpɛŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

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PLATE 16

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a. The members of a segment of a maximal lineage gather at the homestead of the head of the segment to sacrifice to their immediate founding ancestor. 'Sisters' sons' of the segment have the right to be present. The sacrifice has been performed and the goat offered is now being divided up. The two 'sisters' sons' (nearest the camera, wearing caps) sit waiting for their portion of the meat. Note the active interest in the process of cutting up the goat taken by the members of the lineage, most of whom are standing up, by contrast with the passive interest of the 'sisters' sons' on the fringe

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b. Matrilateral kin come to set up a new shrine (the mud cone against the wall, right background) for the grandmother of Pirbazaa (extreme right)

[FACING p. 289]

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rites of setting up a shrine dedicated to her. For safety's sake all the travelling on such journeys was always done at night. During the day the traveller lay low in a kinsman's house. So Teroog set off one night. He went first to his father's mother's brother's home at Gorogo. Thence he was escorted to his father's mother's mother's natal home at Sii. The Sii people took him to a more remote kinsman at Balung and from there he was conducted, by similar stages, to Sandema. His return journey was made in the same way. The whole trip took nearly a month. The same journey can be done on foot, nowadays, in three or four days each way.

Similarly Zubiuŋ men relate how in the old days their Tongo neighbours, being of a different and unconnected clan,[1] used sometimes to raid their livestock to recover bride-price debts. As the people of Tongo were much more numerous than those of Zubiuŋ resistance was generally impossible. But if a Zubiuŋ man had a close matrilateral or affinal kinsman at Tongo, this afforded him some protection. His kinsman would intercede to get any livestock of his that had been seized restored to him, or, if the debtor were a very close agnate of his, to arrange a settlement between creditor and debtor. Often the head of an intercalary lineage, such as Nəŋsuur yidem,[2] undertook this on behalf of his classificatory mother's brother's lineage.

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Nowadays the most important obligations extra-lineage kin have towards one another are in ritual matters, and these are unavoidable obligations. This applies especially to kin of a senior generation in relation to those of a junior generation. A person owes ritual allegiance to his matrilateral ancestors as well as to his paternal ancestors. In fact, in the strictly personal affairs of the individual, his matrilateral ancestors have as decisive a role in his life as his patrilineal ancestors. This accords with the recognition given to maternal origin in the social structure and with the rule that kinship never dies out. Hence there are many occasions in the life of a man when he has to go to his mother's brother or to someone standing in that order of relationship to him to ask him to sacrifice on his behalf. For it must be remembered that the canon of agnatic descent prohibits anyone other than a true patrilineal descendant from sacrificing to an ancestor or ancestress. Thus if a man wants to sacrifice to his mother's spirit guardian he has to go to her natal home and ask her father (or his heir) to perform the sacrifice. Herein lies the force of the statement commonly used to define extra-clan kinship ties, 'I sacrifice on his behalf', or 'he sacrifices on my behalf'. The whole weight of the ancestor cult stands behind these and other ritual obligations of extra-clan kin to one another and no Talən would violate them.

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If we add to this the rule that marriage between extra-clan kin of any degree is forbidden, we can see that there is much in common between

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.
[2] Cf. ibid., pp. 59 and 78.

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604 425 partly because Ɔmara's relationship was with the whole inner lineage, not with Dawoog personally, the request had to be placed before the assembled elders of the inner lineage. The land could not have been granted without their unanimous consent. This having been obtained, a day was fixed for handing over the land. Early in the morning of the appointed day Ɔmara, followed by his oldest son, arrived bringing a [782] fowl and a guinea-fowl and a large basket of guinea corn. Dawoog then summoned all the men of his inner lineage, and proceeded to sacrifice the birds to his lineage ancestors at the lineage *bɔɣar*. Addressing the ancestors he explained all the circumstances of their 'grandson' Ɔmara's request and exhorted them to bless his labour and to grant that the new farm might bring him prosperity. It was a long prayer detailing exactly how Ɔmara was related to Dawoog's lineage and promising that he would bring further offerings in gratitude to the *bɔɣar* whenever the new farm produced good crops. The flesh of the birds was divided amongst all present, including Ɔmara, in accordance with the customary rules.

Ɔmara and his son, accompanied by two young men and an elder of the *ahɔb yiri* deputed by Dawoog, then repaired to the bush-farm. The elder showed Ɔmara the boundaries of the farm and the young men hoed a strip along one boundary to symbolize marking them out (*kyie*). They then set to, with the aid of Ɔmara and his sons, to hoe a small patch, and so symbolically to hand over the right of working the farm. This was symbolized, also, in a simple rite in which the elder handed Ɔmara a large pellet of soil from the farm, mixed with a handful of the flour used in the sacrifice to the *bɔɣar*, to eat.

The procedure was identical in the case of Sɔmbura, with one exception. The land belonged to his *ahɔb* Sayamane's nuclear lineage, so there was no need to obtain the consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Sayamane did, however, inform them because, as he put it, 'you cannot [577] undertake so important a transaction without the knowledge of your "brothers" and "fathers", and besides, telling them makes them witnesses to the act'. It means that there will always be some member of the inner lineage who knows the circumstances and conditions of the gift.

604 577 425 Tallensi attach very great importance to the ritual steps in this transaction. They secure the blessing of his matrilateral ancestors for the recipient of the land. Without this, they believe, failure and even disaster would overtake him when he starts farming the new bush-farm; for, they say, the land really belongs to the ancestors who first cultivated it. Moreover, the ritual formalities also have an explicitly stressed jural function. It is a solemn covenant between the parties, made in the presence of the ancestors, in which all those who have rights in the land avow their consent to the gift and the recipient pledges himself to abide by the implicit conditions of the tenure of the land. The arrangement

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and few people who have an interest in it escape hearing of it in advance. It is the same with funerals. Close extra-clan kin of the dead are informed, distant extra-clan kin, unless there is some special reason for sending them a message, find out indirectly.

An *ahəŋ* is not obliged to attend a sacrifice at his mother's brother's house (*ahəb yiri*); but if it is an important sacrifice, or if it is being made by his own mother's brother, he generally makes an effort to be present. Again, an *ahəŋ* whose home is near to that of his *ahəb* will be more likely to come than one who lives farther away. Thus, as has been recorded, Barimoda seldom missed a sacrifice at his true mother's brother's homestead which was very close to his own. Yinworəb, on the other hand, did not attend a single sacrifice at his mother's brother's house at Yinduuri during the year he was with me. It must not be thought, though, that a sacrifice at one's *ahəb yiri* is considered to be of no consequence. Tallensi say they would always go if they could, for their matrilateral ancestors have powers of blessing only little less than their agnatic ancestors; but it is not compulsory when the sister's son is not himself bringing the sacrifice. As every man has shrines consecrated to those of his matrilateral ancestors who have revealed themselves as directly concerned with his life, in his own home, he generally attends sacrifices at their lineage home only on special occasions or when they command him to offer sacrifice there.[1]

Thus when a man performs a private sacrifice in his own home a close sister's son or two may be present; it would be most unusual to find an *ahəŋ* more distant than a father's sister's son present. But in the majority of such private sacrifices, judging from the several score I have witnessed, sisters' sons are not in attendance. When, however, a cow is sacrificed to a lineage *bəŋar*, there are always *ahəs* present; perhaps only one, perhaps half a dozen, including both near and distant sisters' sons.

As we have mentioned before, the right of a sister's son to be present at ritual ceremonies at his mother's brother's house is recognized by the allocation to him of a prescribed share of the sacrificial meat. He receives the neck of every animal sacrificed. One of the lighter moments at the end of a major sacrifice is the good-humoured wrangling of a group of

[1] We are here touching on one of the most complex features of Tale religious custom. The shrines consecrated to a man's matrilateral ancestors in his own homestead provide him with an indirect route to them. When he sacrifices to them on these shrines, he is, as it were, approaching them through an intermediary spirit or group of spirits. He is never able to approach them directly. Only their agnatic descendants can do that. Generally a matrilateral ancestor spirit (male or female) who has a shrine consecrated to him or her by a daughter's son or descendant demands sacrifices on that shrine. But there are many occasions on which the spirit demands that the sacrifice be offered to him or her directly on the shrine consecrated to him or her at a son's or agnatic descendant's house. It is on such occasions that the 'sister's son' or 'grandson' has to take the animal he has been commanded to offer to the homestead of his 'mother's brother' or 'grandfather'. See below, p. 324.

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ahɔs, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahɔs* divide into two groups, the *dugni ahɔs*, who are sisters' sons of the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yɛŋha* (outside) *ahɔs*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahɔs* should be given to the 'outside *ahɔs*'. The *dugni ahɔs*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat.

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only *ahɔs* of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also remote *ahɔs* and 'grandsons (*yaas*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahɔs* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral.

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things he brings.

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such

[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahɔs* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahɔs* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahɔs* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

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604 764 571 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

63 571 602 782 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *boyar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *boyar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 602 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tendaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tendaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *boyar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tendaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 769 778 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

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and also, as we shall see, the many unpredictable modes of consumption of the grain (e.g. in recompensing collective labour, *vide infra*).[1]

MEAT AND FISH. Meat (*numit*) is subject to even greater fluctuations of supply than grain owing to uncontrollable sources. Every compound possesses some live stock, if it be only a few fowls and guinea-fowls. A well-to-do compound may have a cow or two, even several cows, or a couple of donkeys, but the ordinary man usually comes into possession of these animals only in the form of bride-wealth, which will as likely as not be used immediately to pay a debt or, more rarely, to make a special and urgent sacrifice. In any case, a cow is never slaughtered specifically for food[2] by the average man. We heard of two donkeys being slaughtered in order to sell the meat by a couple of young men out for profit. This was vigorously denounced by the Chief, and was not repeated. As a rule beef is obtained from sacrifices to the ancestor spirits, always made by men of senior status, and from animals offered during funeral ceremonies, donkey-meat only from the latter offerings. The carcase is usually divided up among a large number of people in accordance with kinship status. An elder may obtain a whole leg of a bull, but he will sub-divide it among the compounds or households subordinate to him. Thus, in the long run, the share of a single household comes to a very small quantity, often only a few ounces. But nothing is wasted; the whole carcase, including all the viscera, is consumed.

Sheep and goats are owned by all but the poorest; but again, no one would wantonly slaughter an animal for food. In addition to sacrifices and funerals, there is a number of formal occasions on which one of these animals must be killed, e.g. as an act of hospitality to a mother-in-law or a very great friend. Corresponding to their lesser value and much greater abundance, sheep and goats are sacrificed in larger numbers than cows, often by men of junior status. The

[1] Mr. Lynn, *op. cit.* finds that 1 man supports 3·7 people on the average, on 2·03 acres of farmed land. In addition to the sources of error mentioned in the text, it should be noted that the simplicity of Tale agricultural technology makes it possible for quite small boys to be of occasional, if somewhat casual, assistance in the fields.

[2] The Chief of Tongo slaughtered a cow for his wives and elders at the New Year (*Daa*) Festival in 1934, the only case of the kind we came across.

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consumption of mutton, and especially of goat-meat is thus considerably greater than of beef; and often a household receives an entire leg or half a carcase as its share of a sacrifice made by some one of junior status. One or two of these animals are slaughtered for sale by professional butchers in the markets every week. The markets which we knew best were all within convenient distance of the small foreign settlements of Hausa, Yoruba, and Mossi people found here and there along the motor-road, and observation showed that they were the chief customers of the butchers. But a Talena occasionally buys a little meat—from a few ounces for 3*d*., to a leg for 9*d*. to 1*s*. He may do this when he wishes to make a special gift to the mother of a girl he is courting; or when his wife is confined and he wishes to bring her some strengthening food.

The dog, widely kept as a domestic scavenger, is also a sacrificial animal, though only in special circumstances and on particular occasions such as the New Year's Festival. It is regarded as a great delicacy. Game, greatly prized, is communally hunted with dogs throughout the dry season. This contribution to the larder of the majority, however, seems to be negligible, as game is scarce in the bush on the periphery of Tale-land, and the animals killed become almost entirely the perquisites of chiefs and elders. The carnivores, though regarded with disgust by the young men who take a warrior's pride in killing them, are considered a luxury by the old men. We once observed the division of the carcase of a hyena, shot by a youth, among the elders of his clan. The younger men spurned the animal as a 'filthy thing' because it digs up and devours corpses.

Fish (*zig*) is also prized as a delicate food, and there is always a small supply of dry fish available in the market throughout the dry, and part of the rainy season. The Tallensi fish the pools of the partially dry Volta River communally[1] in the dry season, but with poor success, as far as the average householder is concerned. As a rule fish is bought in the market, like meat, only for special purposes.

The innumerable food taboos, some differentiating the sexes, some of totemic significance, and very many varying from individual to

[1] These fishing expeditions are described in a paper by M. Fortes, 'Communal Fishing and Fishing Magic in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', to be published in the *J.R.A.I.*

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262 individual cannot be discussed here. Where necessary reference will be made to them later, in so far as they influence the consumption of protein foods.

262 For the most part, however, the meat which forms an indispensable ingredient of every well-cooked meal, is that of the guinea-fowl. The 235 domestic fowl which is kept as universally as the guinea-fowl, can- 422 not replace the latter since all women eschew it and all first-born children in some clans taboo it. Every compound has its chickens and guinea-fowls. Every man keeps his own; women often do so too; boys begin to breed poultry before they can use a hoe. For poultry, say the Tallensi, is the beginning of wealth. A chicken may be the cause of a quarrel between householders, in which long-standing friction comes to a head, and which leads to households breaking away from the larger unit. In the ownership of poultry, therefore, the tendencies towards the differentiation of households and individuals within the unit of food economy come to marked expression. An individual, even a small boy, can dispose of his poultry [231] freely; the owner of a sheep or a goat, if he is a junior member of a self-supporting unit, would have to inform the head of his unit before selling it, though the proceeds are his own; and all cattle, though nominally owned absolutely by the head of the joint family, can be disposed of only by the common consent of the senior members of that group. Thus the guinea-fowls which find their way into the cooking-pot are obtained not from the head of the unit of food economy, but by each housewife from her husband or by her own efforts. Guinea-fowls are slaughtered specifically for the pot, fowls never. Both kinds of birds are the commonest sacrificial animals, and [782 431] a guinea-fowl the commonest gift to a woman. Hence the number of birds one sees at a compound is no criterion of the amount of poultry-meat consumed there—the less so as the Tallensi are reluctant to sacrifice their own birds, but prefer to purchase birds for this purpose.[1]

262 The Tallensi are not particularly discriminating in their choice of meat. Domestic animals dying of disease are eaten to the last shred. At the height of the ritual season cows are often slaughtered and left to lie in the broiling sun for two days before time is found to skin them.

[435] [1] Guinea-fowls sell at 1½*d.* to 6*d.*, chickens at 1*d.* to 9*d.* (depending upon size and the season).

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About noon, the owner of the pool arrives, usually quite unceremonially, followed by kinsmen and kinswomen. The owner of the first pool to be fished in 1934 was a minor chief of the *Namoos* group, the *Bolgraana*, who had only recently been installed. To mark this, his first fishing expedition, he arrived escorted by musicians and in the full splendour of his red cap, the prime badge of his rank, and a gaudy gown. The musicians at once became the centre of an eager crowd which soon disposed itself in a dance, while the chief proceeded to his seat under a tree near the bank, the traditional place "where my ancestors (former chiefs) used to sit," he explained. The owner of a pool always registers his claims, in the first instance, by thus taking up his traditional seat, though he need not remain there once the fishing commences.

The multitude is now all keyed up, ready for the plunge. People begin to move about, a tumult of conversation rises from the far side of the river, showing how intense is the anticipatory excitement. As yet not a single person has dared to enter the pool, except at its very fringe to get a drink of water. But the most important preparatory activity is still to come—the magic. The owner is discussing this and other matters with half a dozen elders and men of rank, kinsmen and clansmen from several *Namoos* settlements, or, if he belongs to the *Tallis* group, from *Tallis* settlements. The groups never mix in this sort of situation, in which political, legal, and ritual prerogatives are canvassed. Nevertheless the discussion is not private, nor is its subject matter stereotyped. But its purpose is clear: to affirm the owner's rights. The nature and basis of these rights were formulated explicitly and with vigour in one such discussion: So and so, the chief, owns this pool. His ancestors held the chieftainship before him and owned the pool; he was invested by the Paramount Chief according to the prescribed and traditionally ordained procedure; therefore he owns the pool, as his ancestors did before him, and is consequently entitled to the traditionally fixed tribute, the first fish of respectable size which anyone catches. Nobody must cheat or fight about a fish, as was done in the previous expedition. All this is repeated over and over in rhetorical monologue by each member of the *extempore* council. It is, of course, perfectly well known to everybody, and, what is more curious, the speakers seem to address themselves entirely to their own circle, some of whom will not even enter the water, and all of whom will receive a share of the chief's tribute if the catch is a good one. The purpose of the discussion is apparently not publicity but psychological—assuring the owner that his rights are acknowledged, encouraging him, demonstrating to him that the most respected citizens are on his side and on the side of the traditional guarantees of property rights.

Now comes the crucial act of the series leading up to the actual fishing, the performance of the magical rites. The officiant has been waiting for the owner's word to start at the appointed, traditionally hallowed place, on the bank or by the waterside, surrounded by a number of men and boys of his own lineage, all descendants of the ancestor who originally acquired the magic. There are a number of typical features—

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typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance. Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*knab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*). The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*. Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgnaana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.

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pool, sips a little, and passes the rest to his co-adjutors. These, who are all members of his own paternal family, and may number as many as twenty men, have been treated with the medicine at home—they eat a little mixed with millet porridge, and smear a little over the solar plexus. Then he plants the axe shaft firmly by the water-side, thus symbolically pinioning all dangerous creatures and men and setting up the fetish in closest proximity to its scene of action.

Before anyone not magically protected can enter the water, however, the pool itself must be rendered safe. From a small gourd the officiant gives a little medicine to each of several of his younger co-adjutors. Taking the medicine in their mouths they wade into the pool in a line. Every few minutes they scoop a handful of water which they take in the mouth and squirt out, this way and that; and as they wade, or in the deeper parts swim, they cry out "emerge, emerge, vanish, vanish," to expel crocodiles and other dangerous fish. They traverse the whole pool, watched with close attention by the crowd of fishers, who begin to press forward restlessly. But if anyone dares to step into the water, he is immediately rebuked by the owner of the pool who stands on a high vantage point watching the progress of the boys in the water.

As the boys approach the bank, the suspense of the waiting multitude is at its highest. The owner must give the signal for the general descent into the pool; but he may suddenly burst into an harangue, reminding the people of his ancestral and chiefly rights of ownership, warning them against fighting, and threatening anyone who conceals his catch or otherwise cheats him of his legitimate tribute. Even kinsmen[1]—sisters' sons, brothers-in-law, and so forth—must not abuse the ties of kinship by hiding the fish they catch, he commands.

Then he gives the signal. "Descend," he calls out and the men pressing round him surge into the water with a shout which becomes an exhilarating wordless chant. On every side the chant is taken up and the men sweep into the pool holding their nets aloft. The chant soon subsides but is taken up every now and again in the course of the afternoon. Behind the men follow the women, more soberly and silently; the outermost circle consists of small boys and girls, more bent on play than on serious fishing. The men press forward, in a solid but irregular mass. The bolder spirits, who are able to swim, venture into the deepest parts. The boys who went in to spray the pool magically had been carefully watched, so that everyone knows exactly how far he can go with safety. Indeed in one pool the precaution was taken of sending four good swimmers in to test the depth before the magical rites were performed.

[1] The Tallensi are patrilineal—patrilocal, but cognatic relationship is conspicuously recognised. Members of the owner's joint-family and lineage, who will eventually receive a share of the tribute (see below), have no motive to hide their catch. Clansmen are bound by the rules of ownership of the pool like any stranger but the owner's kindred and affines trade on their personal relationship to him to get away with their catch.

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For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

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	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

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104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

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